

IN THE CLAIMS:

1-7. (Canceled)

8. (Currently amended) A pharmaceutical preparation comprising purified human proNGF as the active ingredient, wherein the purified human proNGF is purified to at least about 90% purity and has an activity in vivo analogous to β -NGF and promotes survival of dorsal root ganglia (DRG) sensory neurons.

9-19. (Canceled)

20. (Previously presented) The pharmaceutical preparation of claim 8, wherein the purified human proNGF is recombinant human proNGF.

21-25. (Cancelled)

26. (Currently amended) The pharmaceutical preparation according to claim 8, wherein the human proNGF has an EC₅₀ value in a dorsal root ganglion (DRG) assay that is ~~at least about 50% of~~ less than about twice that of human β -NGF on a molar basis.

27. (Previously presented) The pharmaceutical preparation according to claim 8, wherein the purified human proNGF comprises an amino acid sequence as set forth in SEQ ID NO: 4.

28. (Previously presented) The pharmaceutical preparation according to claim 8, wherein the purified human proNGF is encoded by a nucleic acid comprising SEQ ID NO: 3.

Please add the following new claim:

29. (New) A pharmaceutical preparation comprising purified human proNGF as the active ingredient, wherein the purified human proNGF has an EC_{50} value in a dorsal root ganglion (DRG) assay that is less than about twice that of human β -NGF on a molar basis.